



Learning to schedule activities and structure your recovery is important in outpatient treatment. Staying busy is important for several reasons.

Often relapses begin in the head of a person who has nothing to do and nowhere to go. The addicted brain begins to think about past using, and the thoughts can start the craving process. **How has free time been a trigger for you?**

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**How could you respond to prevent relapse if free time led to thoughts of using?**

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Often people who abuse substances begin to isolate themselves. Being around people is uncomfortable and annoying. Being alone results in fewer hassles. **Did you isolate yourself when you used? If so, how did this isolation affect your substance abuse?**

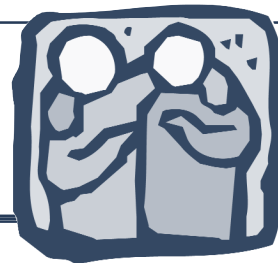
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**How does being alone now remind you of that experience?**

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Being involved with people and doing things keeps life interesting. Living a substance-free life can sometimes feel pretty tame. You begin to think being abstinent is boring and using is exciting and desirable. People have to work at finding ways to make abstinence fun. **What have you done lately to have fun?**

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When people's lives become consumed with substance use, many things they used to do and people they used to do them with get left behind. Beginning to reconnect or to build a life around substance-free activities and people is critical to a successful recovery. **How have you reconnected with old activities and friends? How have you built new activities and brought new people into your life?**

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**If you have not reconnected with old activities and friends or added some new activities and people to your life, what are your plans to do so?**

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